2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

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We have previously seen how carefully the Yakut allotted their spirits to different worlds and cardinal points. The *Abasy*, however, appear to dwell partly in the upper world and partly in the lower one. Further, to those *Abasy* (plur. *Abasylar*) who dwell only in the upper world horses are sacrificed, while to the *Abasy* of the lower world only horned cattle are offered. These spirits have their own households and cattle; but the upper *Abasy* have only horses while the lower ones have only horned cattle. While the *Ajÿsyt* (the goddess of birth) of horses appears to be a man-spirit, the *Ajÿsyt* of horned cattle is a woman spirit. This difference alone leads us to believe that we have here a compound of two conceptions of nature, the result of a consolidation of two different cultures. The man's *Ajÿsyt* is a woman to whom are addressed pleas for children, while prayers for the increase of horses and horned cattle are addressed to the earth's spirit owner. Why were only horses and not horned cattle consecrated to the supreme being, *Ürüñ Ajy Toyon*?

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We have previously seen that *udahan* is a Mongol word and that *us* (smith) is Turkic. The Yakut, when comparing the power of black shamans and smiths, regard the latter as more powerful. They make no comparisons with reference to the *udahan's* power, but say that *udahans* are more powerful than men-shamans. The Yakut preserved the names of their former white shamans, but not those of white women-shamans. From this we might infer that white shamanism was not an aboriginal institution, and that black shamanism is a transformation of female shamans after their functions were transferred to men. No tales of white smiths (smiths working with copper and silver) are extant, but accounts of black smiths (iron smiths) relate that they are more powerful than black shamans. This leads us to the belief that the concept of black smiths and women-shamans appeared as ready-made institutions among the Yakut.

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We will cite another example. We have previously mentioned the upper and lower *Abasy* spirits, that the former possess horses (and also demand horses as sacrifices) and the latter, horned cattle. At burials the horse of the deceased was killed and buried with its master. Such horses had a special name, *xolynga*. At home a mare was killed in memory of the deceased. It was called *ûlâ asa*, the worker's food, and was for those who made all the preparations for the burial. Later, a cow was substituted for the mare. When the number of horses decreased, the dead horse was not buried, but eaten at home. Still later, the flesh of a cow was eaten instead of a horse.

From the above it is obvious that the pre-Christian beliefs of the Yakut require further investigation to disentangle the different layers.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

Shamanism

Shamans (*saza ababyta*, Yakut priest, and *sábáki* in the Viliuisk District) are divided into two classes, white or creative shamans (*Ajy ayuna*) and black or malevolent beings' shamans (*Abasy oyuna*). The white shaman serves as an intermediary between benevolent creative beings and mankind, whom he does not and cannot harm. He has no special shamanistic dress and does not even possess a drum. He bestows only blessings and asks the White-Lord-Creator to make beneficent gifts. He seldom addresses any other sky-dweller but the White-Lord-Creator: for instance, to cure barrenness he appeals to *Mohan Sylgylaz* or some other deity. He does not kill cattle as a sacrifice; he only dedicates them to some sky dweller, after which the animal is not required to perform any work and is cared for and well fed.

Fig. 2 (70-9070). The Back of a Shaman's Ceremonial Coat.

The black shaman serves as an intermediary between evil spirits and men. He cures sick people by extracting from them the evil spirits causing the illness. The power and ability of the black shaman varies. His spirit protectors may dwell in the upper, middle, or lower worlds. The most powerful shaman is one who has wolf and bear spirits as his protectors. The black shaman may also harm men against whom he is ill-disposed, casting diseases and miseries on them.

Some information on Yakut shamanism was given in my publications on the Koryak and Yukaghir.[1] Here I shall treat the subject in more detail and add new drawings and additional explanations to the illustrations in these previous publications.

The Shaman's Coat. I succeeded in securing for the Museum three costumes of Yakut shamans. Two were secured in the Yakut District of

[1] Jochelson, Waldemar, The Koryak (*Memoirs, American Museum of Natural History*, vol. 10, 1905-1908), 21, 30, 36, 48, 53, 56, 57, 59, 61, 91, 92, 101, 102, 113, 119, 120; Jochelson, Waldemar, The Yukaghir and Yukaghirized Tungus (*Memoirs, American Museum of Natural History*, vol. 13, 1910-1926), 135, 158, 159, 182, 183, 185, 186.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

539 Onogoi, as the chief, was given the first goblet. When he took it, he fell to the ground, unconscious and sightless, with stiffened limbs. The people believed it to be a message from the gods because Onogoi had damned Er-Elliei and mutilated the cattle created by god.

Shortly after Onogoi died and all his riches vanished. His only son became poor and subsisted on the booty of his black dog.

The Yakut living in different districts originated from emigrants of the Yakut district, who partly voluntarily and partly forced by powerful tribes, settled the distant region.

After the death of Er-Elliei the kumiss festival was celebrated in the same manner in all the *uluses*.

796 The kumiss festival (*ysyax*) has both social and religious significance.
● 782 During the summer, in olden times, every rich man arranged a kumiss
756 festival at which all members of the clan assembled and were entertained.
[614] Other people, and frequently whole clans, were also invited. During the festival defensive and offensive leagues were concluded. Every such ceremony was initiated with sacrifices, which were accompanied with songs, dances, games, horse and foot races, and other contests.

Two kumiss festivals in honor of the deities were arranged during the year by the owners of large droves of mares. The spring festival was consecrated to the Supreme Being and the head of the benevolent deities of the class of "creators" (*ayi*),—to Lord-Bright-Creator. The first milking of mares in the spring is also consecrated to the Supreme Being. The spring festival is called *Ayi ysyaxa* (kumiss festival in honor of the "creators"). Spring, as the period of the revival of nature, was the season of happiness and abundance. In the prayers addressed to the "creators" they are implored to bestow their blessing upon the people. The spring kumiss festival takes place in the open air. In the midst of a large smooth grass meadow is erected a kind of altar, consisting of two posts with a cross beam and three young birch trees with young shoots on them (see p. 201). The altar is hung with sacrificial horsehair; on the ground in front of it are placed ornamented birchbark and oxhide barrels filled with kumiss. The skin barrels are tied to the altar-frame by long ornamented strips of soft elk leather, so that the vessels will not collapse when softened by the liquid in them.

The ceremony commences with sacrifices to Lord-Bright-Creator and to other "creators." Their names are uttered by the steward of the festival, who may be a shaman or an older member of the clan. The sacrifices consist of libations of kumiss to every deity, in the direction of the dawn; formerly horses were often consecrated by being driven to the

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

east, the seat of the "creators." Blood sacrifices were made only to evil deities and not to the "creators." In front of the altar stood the steward with the owner of the drove and his wife on either side of him. All three faced east where dwell the benevolent deities. In a row on the right side of the altar stood nine innocent youths and on the left nine virgins with goblets filled with kumiss consecrated to the benevolent deities. The participants were clad in splendid festival attire, trimmed with valuable fur, silver pendants, and other decorations.

The steward addressed a prayer to the "creators," begging for blessings: increase of horses and cattle, a good harvest of hay, good health for the people and animals, and an abundance of food. Then he took the kumiss festival ladle (*ysyax xamyyaha*) and made a libation, in the direction of the dawn, to the benevolent deities. Then, while making a libation to the ground, he addressed the local deity, "the owner of the place" (*ăn doidu iccitä*), asking him not to harm the inhabitants of the spot and the members of the clan. After that, the steward, with the help of the sacrificial ladle, proceeded to prophesy. He threw the ladle towards the sky, and if it fell with the bowl part upwards, it portended the granting of future abundance by the deities and all the people uttered the joyful cry, *Uru!*

Then, according to the directions of the steward, the boys and girls gave the goblets of sacrificial kumiss to the elder and honored members of the clan, both male and female, who placed themselves to the right and left of the altar, drank from the goblets and passed them on to the less important and the younger people. Behind every honored or aged member of the clan, sat or stood his domestics, less esteemed relatives, young men, and laborers, whose welfare was his responsibility. When the goblet was emptied, it was returned to the steward or host to be filled.

At the same time, not far from the altar, other stewards were preparing tables, or simply boards on the ground, on which were placed piles of horse and cow meat and dishes of melted butter. Every chief of a family or clan received a large portion of meat and butter, which he divided among his people.

The whole day passed with songs, round dances, games, races and other contests, and shamanistic performances. The poetical choral songs of the young men and girls, in praise of the spring and love, were very interesting. Middendorff[1] and Sieroszevski[2] recorded some of these songs. During the kumiss festival the change from winter to spring was

[1] Middendorff, *ibid.*, Part 2, 1578.
[2] Sieroszevski, *ibid.*, Vol. 1, 587 *et seq.*

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

dramatized in a contest between two men. One, dressed in white, represented spring, and was called "son of creator" (*ayi uola*); the other, clad in black, represented winter, and was called "son of evil spirit" (*abasy uola*).

The autumnal festival was celebrated in honor of the destructive forces and was therefore called *abasy-ysyax*. It was dedicated to the evil spirits (*abasylar*), the inhabitants of the west and the representatives of darkness and night, in order that they may not interfere with them in winter, when starvation, disease, and death are imminent. This festival also took place in the open air, but at night.

The first night, the ceremony was in honor of Big-Lord (*Ûlu-Toyon*) and the evil spirits of the upper world subordinate to him. The ceremony of the second night was in honor of *Axsan Duolai* and his subordinates, the evil spirits of the lower world. To all of these evil spirits, in addition to the libations of kumiss made to the benevolent deities, blood sacrifices of cattle and horses were also made. This ceremony was superintended by nine male and nine female shamans.

Kumiss Vessels and their Decorations

Kumiss vessels may be divided into three types, according to form:—

1. The *corōn*, a very large urn-shaped goblet with a small base holding from ten to fifteen liters of kumiss. Their small bases make them unstable. To drink from them, they must be held with both hands. Three large goblets of varying sizes are reproduced in Fig. 91. Two of them, in addition to the engraved decorations, are ornamented with silver hoops and pendants and one with pendants of red cloth and hair from a horse's mane.

2. *Us ataxtāx corōn*, i.e., tripod goblets of smaller size are illustrated in Fig. 90. Fig. 90*a* is ornamented with silver rings.

3. Cylindrical vessels with set-in bottoms of varying sizes, and named according to their size, the small one, *mācax;* and the large ones, *ymyja*.

All these drinking vessels are made from the strong, tough wood of the polar birch tree. The first two types are carved and hollowed from one piece. Formerly the adze was the implement used for hollowing but recently a chisel. The finish, polish, and decoration are accomplished with knives only. The sides of these goblets are made very thin and they easily crack when drying. A goblet left empty in the sun for a single day is sure to crack. To guard against injury, they are kept in a dark, damp place, and are also freely oiled with melted butter, which gives them a

6: Sauer--117-118 G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut-1-2
116, 756, 782, 796, 823

"When the hut is full, the elder shaman rises, and commands one of the Socha that he knows to be qualified (namely, that has not seen a corpse within the month, and that has never been accused of theft, or bearing false witness against any body, which defiles them for ever, and renders them unqualified for this sacred and solemn task) to take a large goblet, called a tshoron, which is used to drink out of on solemn occasions, and fill it with koumis out of the first symir; then to place himself before the hearth, with his face to the east, holding the tshoron to his breast about [118] two minutes. He then pours koumis three times on the hot embers, as an offering to Aar Toyon. Turning a very little to the right, he pours three times to Kubey Chatoon; then to the south he offers in the same manner to each of the benevolent gods. With his face to the west, he pours three times to the 27 tribes of aërial spirits; and three times to the north to the eight tribes of the pit, and to the manes of their departed sorcerers. After a short pause, he concludes his libation by an offering to Enachsys the cowherdess. The sorcerer then turns the man with his face to the east, and commences a prayer aloud, thanking the godhead for all favours received, and soliciting a continuance of their bounty. On concluding his prayer, he takes off his cap, with which he fans himself three times, and cries out aloud, 'Oorui!' (grant) which is repeated by all present. The elder shaman then, taking the tshoron, drinks a little, and hands it to his brethren of the same order; from whom it passes to the company as they sit, except such as are

defiled. Women are not admitted into the hut; nor are they, or the disqualified, allowed any of the koumis out of the first symir, which they call sanctified, as possessing the power of purifying and strengthening in a divine sense."

6: Sauer--119-121 G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut-1-2
116, 755, 782, 776

"When a sick Socha sends for a shaman to appease the wrath of the evil spirits that torment him, the sorcerer takes a switch, ties a few hairs from the mane of a horse to the end of it, walks and jumps about the sick person, waves his switch, and conjures the demons to appear and relate the cause of their tormenting him, and how they are to be appeased.

After some time has passed in this invocation, he starts, pretends to see the spirits, and, listening to their admonition for some [120] time, turns to the patient, and tells him whence the spirits came; that it was with a view of destroying him, but that they might be induced to accept as a sacrifice, instead of him, a fat mare or a cow, mentioning the particular colour. This is immediately procured; for whoever has one answering the description readily gives it.

The offering being procured, the shaman dresses himself in full form, walks with his switch to the possessed, embraces him, and commands the demons to leave him; then, rising in great agitation, he suddenly springs upon the offering, raving and shouting as much as he possibly can: the beast now starting, and being restless, is a proof of the pain that it endures from the demon.

The following morning the sacrifice is led to the place appointed, which is always on a rising ground at the entrance into a wood. Four poles are driven into the ground, on which they erect a stage covered with twigs, wheron the offering is slain and skinned.

The flesh is dressed and eaten on the spot; the bones collected, wrapped up in the twigs that were on the scaffold, put inside the skin of the animal, and stuck at the top of some tree on the spot: if the sacrifice was to the aërial spirits, the head is directed upwards; if to the spirits of the pit, the head is looking downwards. The sorcerer then, arrayed in his magic robes, takes his tambour, and begins his formal spells; beating his tambour, raving, jumping, and using an unintelligible jargon in the most extravagant manner; his long hair hanging over his face, he conjures the spirit of the sacrifice to its demons, and the demons to their proper place of retirement; seems, several times during his incantations, to faint, during which paroxysms he receives the inspired power of prognosticating the fate of the diseased, and the day either of his restoration to health, or of his death. If [121] he prove mistaken, it is not regarded as arising from want of skill, but the unacceptableness of the sacrifice, which is occasionally renewed till he dies or recovers.

If a shaman acquaints any family that some demon is intent on inflicting a punishment, offerings are made to avert the evil; not of live beasts, but the rich skins of animals, which are hung up in a conspicuous part of the hut, and buried with the owner when he dies."

6: Sauer--126 G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut
116, 756, 782, 789, 842

"Travelling with Captain Billings to the river Mayo, I observed the following offering in the hut of Surtuyea Birdugin, an unchristened prince or chief, to Shessugai Toyon and his wife Aksyt, for the blessing of children, called Ogo Oyetto, the child's nest. It was a horse-hair cord tied round the chimney, leading to the sleeping place of the host and hostess, ornamented with bunches of horse hair. Two round pieces of the bark of birch, to represent sun and moon, suspended; also the representation of a stallion and a mare formed out of the bark, and a few wooden dolls dressed. The cord was fastened to the post at the head of their bed, where was placed a wicker basket with moss and fur at the bottom; and on a little table in the basket was set a very small wooden bowl, containing boiled flour; all of which was placed by a shaman with great magic ceremony. The prince has three wives, and was married 15 years without having had any children before this offering was made; but afterwards each of his wives bore their share of children, and he has now six sons and daughters. This account was related to Captain Billings and me in the presence of Mr. Hornossky, the captain of the district of Yakutsk, by the prince himself: each wife has her separate dwelling some miles distant from either of the others; and a similar offering is placed in each of their huts."

7: Shklovsky -- 22 - 23 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116.776. 782. 826

"The influence of the Yakutian mythology can perhaps be seen at its strongest in the ideas concerning the brown bear, which animal is found in large numbers in the Kolymsk country, and is believed by the Yakuts to be an incarnation of their most terrible god, 'Ulu-Tayon.'

For example, a long caravan of pack-horses will suddenly stop on its way.

'What is the matter?' ask anxious voices.

'Ulu-Tayon,' answers the terrified guide.

And, indeed, the dreaded beast comes out of the forest and sits on its haunches, showing its teeth at them. He fears to attack so many people, but, on the other hand he does not seem inclined to go away.

All the men huddle together, and the best speaker among them advances a little, removing his cap and saying:

'Ulu-Tayon, we know that you alone are the owner of these parts and we have not come into your territory to insult you, but because our way lies through it. Forgive us, O Ulu-Tayon, for you know very well that none of our sons are bear hunters. Why then should you harm us?'

Meanwhile some of the Yakuts prostrate themselves and cry: 'Have mercy on us, Ulu-Tayon! Others with trembling hands prepare huge wood fires.[23] It frequently happens that the bear keeps them there for twenty-four hours, and all the time the Kolymyans supplicate the bear. They consider it a sin to pronounce his name, and they speak of him as 'Grandfather' or 'he'."

7: Shklovsky -- 53 - 54 T-3 (1891-92)1916 Yakut
116, 585, 776, 782, 844

"As soon as the fire blazed on the hearth, they seated Kitchipyr [RCH: the bride of a wedding attended by the author] on the seat by the wall and hung a curtain of suede before her. On the threshold of the hut a young colt was killed, and the blood which spouted from the jugular vein was placed in a cauldron. The Shaman, taking some in a small bowl, poured it out on the ground at the door in order that the terrible god, Oulooss-Hannak-Tayon, his wife Han-Hatine, also the Lord of all Evil Spirits, Arsine-Dolai, who 'has a mouth at the back of his head and eyes in his temples,' might not bring harm into the dwelling. Another small bowl of blood the Shaman poured into the fire, a similar libation to the 'Spirit of the Hut', the little old woman, Nyaha Haraksine, who 'lives under the pole which supports the roof of the hut'; and also to the 'Patroness and Mother Saviour and Compassionate Lady Aisit-Hatine'. This kind goddess is the patroness of the Yakuts in general and of the women in particular. It is she who arranges the marriages, decides the fate of the pair, and helps [54] women in child-birth. According to the endless fairy-tale, 'Khan Jargistai,' which contains all Yakutian cosmogony, this goddess came to the first woman in her travail, remained with her three days, then left her, declaring that henceforth, so long as the Yakuts should exist, every woman three days after child-birth should rise, wash herself, and feed the cattle."

7: Shklovsky -- 54 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 585, 782

"During this offering to the Penates, [RCH: at the wedding ceremony attended by the author] the hut was encircled by an enormous leather strap, to which were fastened all the cattle belonging to the young couple. The Shaman put on the sacrificial robe, came out of the hut and stood in the centre of the living ring. To all the evil gods the Shaman poured out a libation of koumiss; to the beneficent gods there was no libation, as they were well disposed without propitiation."

7: Shklovsky -- 181 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 776, 782, 823

"On the fourteenth day we passed over the Alazeisky Range--the frontier of the Kolymyan region. The ascent is gradual, and the mountains are not especially remarkable; they are more like rows of hills. Following the local custom we tied little pieces of rag on the pole at the crest of the mountain. White partridge feathers, different coloured ribbons, bunches of horsehair, all these were offerings to the Spirit of the Mountain. As the ascent of the range is easy, the Yakuts do not think it necessary to waste too many offerings, finding that the spirit is kind enough without them. It is different on the terrible Verkhoyansk Range, where merchants, as well as Yakuts, throw to the spirit money pieces of butter, fat, etc."

10: Bush--300 [4] T-3 (1865-67) 1871 Yakut
116, 771, 778, 782, 824

"Their religion was very similar to that of the other Siberian tribes, though they did not worship carved idols like the Tungusians. They offered sacrifices to one great invisible God, of whom each tribe had an image, with a stuffed bag for a body, surmounted by a huge hideous head. All trees they looked upon as sacred objects, and uncommonly fine ones they used to decorate with various trinkets."

12: Galitzin -- 147-148 N-2 (no date) 1853 Yakut -1-2
116, 224, 774, 825, 778, 782

"The Yacoutes have for the bear a kind of superstitious fear: they believe that in this animal the spirit survives the body. In spite of this, they do not scruple to shoot a bear and to eat its flesh, but it is by observing certain forms which they suppose have the power to turn aside the witchcraft. Imagine some Yacoutes travelling, and in crossing a forest that they should meet a bear. All begin by taking off their caps, lavishing upon him many salutations, and calling him by the name of toïoné (lord) of worthy old man, of good father, and so on. In the mean time they beseech him, in the most humble terms, to allow them to continue their journey, assuring him, that instead of forming any bad design against his lordship, on the contrary, they entertain the greatest respect for him. But whilst addressing these fine words to the animal, our cunning Yacoutes go forward, choose a tree suitably situated, in order to be safe from behind, and then shoot the animal dead. This first point settled, they make haste to skin it, and having cut it into pieces without breaking the bones, which they put aside (it will soon be seen for what reason), they cook the said pieces. During the preparations, a man of the same party has taken care to knead, with clay lightly moistened, a little statue representing Boënai, the Great Spirit. The meat being cooked, the caldron is raised in addressing a prayer to Boënai and to the spirit of the forest. According to the belief of the Yacoutes, each forest is placed under the direct influence of a spirit. They then sit down round the smoking soup, and each of the guests takes care to pour on the

fire the first spoonful of gravy. Then the feast begins. While it lasts, the guests often apostrophize the ghost of the bear which they have thus dispatched. 'No,' say they, 'don't believe us capable of having perpetrated such a murder. Among us, poor Yacoutes, the art of making guns and deadly balls is unknown. They are either some Russians or Toungouses who have done the evil deed.' After the repast the bones of the animal are carefully put together, wrapped up with the idol in a piece of birch-tree bark, and then hung up to a tree. "You see it well,' they go on repeating during the [148] ceremony, 'far from being murderers, it is on the contrary we who gather together here the bones of this bear killed by others!"

13: Sarytschew--12 N-3 (1785-90) 1806 Yakut
116, 782, 823

"On our way we had occasion to cross a great chain of mountains, named Atbas, to which the Jakuts pay homage, as in fact they do to all distinguished mountains, by depositing offerings of horse-hair on the trees. My guides did not omit this ceremony, each Jakut tearing out some hairs from his horse's tail, or mane, and hanging them on the nearest branches of the trees."

13: Sarytschew--13-14 N-3 (1785-90) 1806 Yakut
116, 554, 756, 782

"The shamans demand nothing for their trouble, but are contented with what is given them: they have, however, always the privilege of the first seat at the feast on the sacrifice, when they eat with a voracious appetite. For the evil spirit they set apart the head, legs, tail, and skin; which, when stretched upon a pole, are hung on a birch, or larch-tree, from whence they are never removed. [14]

The credit which the shamans enjoy with all these people, prevents them from being suspected of any deception; and the conceit of their holding an intercourse with evil spirits, confirms every one still more in the opinion, that whatever happens through the shaman is effected in a supernatural way by the aid of devils. This prejudice of course affords them an opportunity of imposing several tales and absurdities upon the superstitious ignorance of the multitude; such as pretending to have the power of knowing the past, present, and future; of commanding the winds and storms; of producing fine or bad weather; of finding things that are lost; of healing the sick, affording good sport to the hunter, &c and all which they never neglect to turn to their own advantage."

14: Krauss--168 E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut
116, 756, 776, 782

I remember very well, that once one of the shamans (a Christian), whom I had managed to persuade to perform a mystery of the kind which is destined to ask the spirits for something, went into the tent, crossed himself three times devoutly before the saints' images, then turned around, sat down in front of the fireplace and started calling upon his spirits. I should, however, like to report on that mystery ceremony below.

I want to formulate it briefly: there is no hill or slope, no isolated tree, no lake, river, or brook on the roads north of Yakutsk which would not have their protecting spirits. The most prominent among them are simply called ebja-chotun (dear women mother).

Just as the autochthonous Yakuts, the Russian merchants of the area use to sacrifice to the spirit of a locality in order to dispose him favorably. Everybody gives what he can afford; some will tear a piece out of their garments, others will pull some hairs from the manes of their horses to fix them on a tree or sign-post, some give money, and he who possesses nothing, at least a stone, a horse skull, a horse hide, or his stick. Such offerings are called delburgja salaka.

14: Krauss--168 [2] E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut
116, 224, 776, 782, 824

I remember to have seen a powerful single tree trunk, densely hanged with motley rags, when I was crossing the Verchojan ridge. My companion and guide in this travel, sergeant in the Yakut Cossack regiment, Mr. P. N. Kalinkin, told me laughingly that those Cossacks who were in charge of the mail convoy used to search the tree and usually found some money, and spent it in drinking. But the same Cossacks who abuse the money given to the spirits will sacrifice to the spirits who provide rich hunting, whenever they go hunting predacious animals or birds and want to equal the lucky Yakut. To be sure, they replace the magic formula which is prescribed for every sort of hunting by some mixture of meaningless syllables and sometimes by fragments of rarely used orthodox prayers.

A Yakut never chooses to sit down in the shadow of a single tree because he is convinced that there lives a ghost on the tree; he rather tries to pass the tree as quickly as possible.

14: Krauss--168 [3] E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut
116, 756, 771, 776, 782

I also remember a case where the Yakuts who accompanied me while I was traveling in the Verchojan district, with desperation because of the terrific weather first murmured prayers, calling upon Tangar (God) and Nicholas, God's favorite (Nikolaja Ugodnika), the still honored protector of wandering people, until they started exercising their Shaman magic.

When I asked the people about this rapid change, the sorcerers would calmly reply 'If God doesn't help, the spirits may still hear our prayer, and send aid'. This lack of distinction is, in my opinion, simply accounted for. The people have left one bank without having reached the other; they have not grasped the faith in God, but have given up the faith in the strength and might of their formerly worshiped ghosts to a great extent.

14: Krauss--170-171 E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut-1-4
116, 756, 776, 782, 753

The initiation of a shaman is performed publicly. An old shaman conducts the one to be initiated on a high hill or on an open field, dresses him in a kuma (i. e. a red cotton wrapper) gives him a scepter hanged with horse-hair, and places nine youths to his right, nine girls to his left. He himself stands behind the novice, to whisper the shaman magic formulas in his ear. The latter has to repeat them:

"I promise to be a protector of the unhappy, a father of the miserable, and a mother of the orphans. I shall honor the demons who live on the tops of the high mountains, and swear that I shall serve them with all my strength. I shall honor, bow to, and serve the highest and most powerful of them, the demon who commands all demons, the master of the three demon sibs who live on the tops of the mountains, him whom the shamans call Sostuganach Ulu-Toen (the frightful, terrible one); his elder son Ujgul-Toen (the insane one), his wife Ujgul-Chotun (the insane woman), his younger son Kiakja-Curan-Toen (the loudly speaking one), his wife Kiakja-Curan-Chotun, and their numerous family and servants, through whom they send the people diseases, accidents, breakings of legs, and the podagra. I vow to save those who have been affected by these diseases, by sacrificing a cream-colored mare.

"I shall profess and worship, bow to, and serve Ulu Toen's younger brother, the demon Chara-Surun-Toen (the black raven), his son Alban-Buran-Toen (the resourceful venturer), his daughter Kys-Salisaj (the virgin who walks), who prompts people to commit manslaughter, suicide, and calumny. I promise to help rid these people of

their passions by offering the said demons a black horse.

"I shall profess, worship, and bow to the demon Altan-Sobiraj-Toen (the brazen basin), his wife Altan-Sobiraj-Chotun (the one with the bigger brazen arrow), their daughters Timir-Kuturuk (iron tail) and Kejulgan-Darchan (the important, great, lopping woman), who send mankind chronical abscesses. I shall help free the sick by sacrificing some (Arago) liquor, and offering the demons a motley seamew, as a gift of honor.

"I shall profess and worship, and bow to the ancester of these demons who is known as Kjun-Zelerjuma-Sakryl-Chotun (the horrible foe of the sun) who has 52 tables full of holes, and 52 servants. She sends the people the passion of game and drinking, of robbery, plundering, abject deeds, and suicide. I shall try to heal those who are obsessed with these vices. I shall kill a red-spotted young mare who is an ambler, and twist heart and liver of the mare round my neck; I shall perform shaman magic to propitiate the goddess.

"I shall profess and honor the demon above the demons of the six sibs who live in the place where the sinners' souls are sent to; I will bow to the one who is known among the shamans as Talirdach-Tan-Taraly-Toen (he who drags into ruin), his daughters Sorocha-Chotun (the wind-driven female beauty, and San-Chotun, and his countless servants who send men and cattle epidemic diseases. To propitiate them I shall offer them a sorrell-spotted mare.

"I shall profess, honor, and bow to the demon Bor-Malachaj-Toen (deformed earth)

and his wife Bor-Malachaj-Chotun who send mankind various diseases and, especially, death. If in a family children should die, I will implore these demons for mercy, and [171] offer them a black cow with a half-white head.

"I shall profess, honor, and bow to the demon Archach-Toen (the sick one) and his wife Archach-Chotun, who send mankind consumption. I shall heal the affected by offering a blackish brown cow.

"I shall profess, and honor the demon Njas-Elju (cart-horse, death) and his wife Yeryk-Chotun (the sick one) who send the people falling sickness and Siberian pestilence. I shall try to heal those who have been affected by these diseases by offering an eelpout and a trout.

"I shall profess, honor, and bow to the demon Kytaj-Baksy-Toen who gives the Yakuts resourceful smiths and powerful shamans. When Kytaj, angry with a smith, sends him a disease, I promise to kill a red cow in his honor, to spread the blood over all the forge tools, and to burn the heart and the liver to ashes in the chimney. If I should be affected by this disease, another shaman will sacrifice for me and propitiate the demon.

"I shall profess, honor, and bow to the daughter of the demon, Tamyk-Chotun (the haughty one). She sends mankind mental diseases of various kind. Those who have been affected by such diseases I shall heal by sacrificing nine ermines, nine snow-weasels, nine fitchews, and nine pigeons; I vow to catch them alive, to adorn them, and to release them entirely.

14: Krauss--170-171 E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut-4
116, 756, 776, 782, 753

"I shall profess and bow to, I shall honor the shaman woman Tajaktach-Njacaj (the feeble one with the reed), her husband Atyr-Chataj (the eagle) and his countless family and descendants, who send the people oppression of the chest. Those who have been affected by this disease I shall try to save by sacrificing a light-red cow with but one horn.

"I shall acknowledge, honor, and bow to the heavenly shaman Kybilyr Ojun (the white swan), his sister Kytalyktyr-Kyrbyky (the swan of the acute wings). and their mother Soruktach-Sodor (the charitable ruler), who send the people deafness and every kind of ear disease. Those who have been affected by it I shall try to save by offering a red cow with but one horn (agar mostach kugas).

14: Krauss--173 E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut
116, 756, 787, 554, 782

As soon as one finds himself at a loss to help himself by shamanic magic, one approaches a shaman in the hope to reach the desired healing from the demons by the shaman's mediation. A patient may travel hundreds of versts to find a shaman, and as soon as a shaman arrives somewhere, news of his arrival will quickly spread over the entire neighborhood. Curious people, and those who hope to be relieved from their ailments will crowd together at the spot to see the shaman and to inquire of him about the future. The shamans will never refuse to reply, but will assert that they possess the gift of prophecy, especially during the mystery ceremonies.

The shaman is treated with high respect; he gets a seat in the 'honor corner'. He is entertained with liquor and exquisite meals, before they tell him what their wishes are. The shaman will not hesitate to demand that a bull or horse be killed, in view of the importance of the request and the spirit to be called upon. His demand is met without opposition by the Yakuts, and they usually offer the meat not only to the shaman, but also to all those present. A certain part of the animal is destined for sacrifice, according to the shaman's doctrine.

14: Krauss--173-174 E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut-1-2
116, 756, 776, 782

After the shaman has appeased his hunger and thirst, he puts on his kuma (if he possesses one), approaches the fireplace at its front side, throws fat into the fire as a sacrifice for the spirits, grasps the fat smoke with open hands and brings them to his mouth to make believe that he is swallowing them and so gets control over the spirit whom he wants to address with his intercession. Then he takes the drum, sits down before the fireplace on a reindeer skin of good quality, and takes a whip which is adorned with fringes of horse hair and motley rags, or with tails of small game, colored with alder bark. The skin is turned towards the fireplace so that the head is next to it. The shaman now beats his drum and tries to divert the spirits' attention towards himself by sounding a long "ay"; he yawns by devilishly opening his mouth, sounds three times the cry of the ember-goose (cek, cek, cek), apes three times the cry of a stork, three times that of a cuckoo, and three times that of a raven.

Then he calls upon the squint-eyed (inistjagas), deformed (keltjagjaj), lame (dogolon) devil (jugjug emjagjat), and curses himself by assuring the Satan of his devotion, promises to be a faithful servant, and asks him to obsess him. Now he rises, supposing that he now has communication with the devil, that the latter has obsessed him, and that he himself now is in command of the devil's power and might. He calls upon the white bird (jurjun-as): "May this become my place; may green grass grow on here; I have given myself to your life and blood, oh Satan! You root of every evil and mishap (ytyk élju

14: Krauss--173-174 E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut-2
116, 756, 776, 782

térdè)," so he continues, "you monster of the eight feet, I have joined you, so [174] lend your aid in accomplishing the wishes. I have come from sjurdjach-kjaptjach, sjugja-toenton, the terrible god of the hatchet, and from kini-sjurgju-jutjanjan-sjurgjuja, in order to save him by means of the salutary tool. But you, she-shamans of the fiery lashes, who live in the nether world, do not come to the upper world to fight or curse me. I have sat down on the navel of the earth in order to give protection to the sick. I am well aware of my faults, but suppose I were without faults and give way. Your three black shadows, oh devil, have come upon me, so I beg you, help me. Look, I am offering you such an animal, so help my misery!"

14: Krauss--174-175 E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut-1-2
116, 756, 782

The more favorable news the shaman brings back from his trip to the nether world or to heaven, the more excited are those present in encouraging him, and they ask him with satisfaction to hasten the treatment of the patient. Nevertheless the shaman does not hurry up, but will only be moved after long hesitation on his part and long requests on the part of the people.

According to circumstances, the healing is done in different fashions. The shaman approaches the sick person, observes him, spits into the palm of his own hand, and rubs the affected part of the patient's body. Then he assures the relatives, that if the spirits should be pleased by the offering, the patient will at once be healed; if, however, the spirits would not be satisfied with the sacrifice, it would be beyond his, the shaman's means to alter this decision.

Or else, the shaman approaches the patient's couch and cries three times above the head of the latter: "Just tell me what kind of (sacrificial) animal you want; only leave the patient". The spirit who lives in the sick person replies through the shaman: "If you offer me a sadzaga (a cow with white-spotted back) or a bulur (a dun horse), I shall quit the patient". The animal is offered. For this purpose, ten very small larches (Con-kerbjana) and one birch are needed. One larch and the birch are placed before the tent one behind the other. Nine notches are made into the first larch. The other nine are placed around the first two in a semi-circle. On the southern side they are twisted with a linen cord, which is hanged with motley rags and horse-hair. [175]

14: Krauss--174-175 E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut-2
116, 756, 782.

The animal to be offered is bound on the tree which has been notched (salama); the shaman, going to heaven, addresses Aj-toen asking pity from him. He says: "As men feel pity towards the patient, and since the old mothers (chotottur) have given back his soul to him (kul), accept the animal instead of his soul". After he has cried three times, and spat at the animal (the patient spits, too), the animal is allowed to run to the flock. Then the shaman continues: "Look, here it is, accept it, give deliverance". "I have accepted it", the devil replies through the shaman, "and the patient will recover within seven, eight, nine days."

14: Krauss--175 E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut
116, 756, 782

The shaman sings that the devil is at once precipitating into the nether world (ojbon-timirja) with the ember-goose; there he delivers the animal offered for slaughter. For concreteness's sake the shaman takes a little board (which may be interpreted as a table), carves a round hole in it, puts a bit of meat on it, and throws everything into the fire. Then he lights the mane of a black horse three times, inhales the smoke, and asks somebody of the present to cut the fire below his head, and to give him a drink of water and sour milk (umdan), of the water of this world. Now he takes three twigs, beats the drum with them, and exercises the last survivals of the devil: "Those of you who have fallen from above, go up; those of you who have come from below, go down, you devils!" Exhausted by the roaring and by the movements on all sides, and giddy, he sits down, wet with sweat. Occasionally, he is unable with exhaustion to put out his kuma.

An animal which has thus been offered is no more used for work. If it dies, an attempt is made to replace it by another one of the same color, because otherwise, the same disease would return to the former patient. It also happens that the animal is offered to the mothers (chottuttorga). Tongue, heart, and liver are boiled and put on a one-legged table which has been carved for this purpose only. Its top carries a round hole. The balance of the meat is eaten by the Yakuts. The bones and other remains are burned after the meal. Thus the sacrifice is accomplished.

14: Krauss--176-177 E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut
116, 776, 782

The Yakut Gods have their domiciles either on the tops of the mountains and in the skies: these are the esja abasylar, the upper spirits, or beneath the surface of the earth in the nether world: the allara abasylar, the demons of the lower regions. The gods are partly good spirits who are known as aj and tangara (god), and partly demons. Among the former there are:

Jut-tas olbochtach Jurjun-aj-Toen; this is the true ajbyt aga (father of the creation), the white god on the milk-white, stone throne. He lives in the skies and rules over all the subaltern deities, and does the living creatures in the universe nothing but [177] good. As he is the creator of the world, he is approached on the occasion of the yech festival (religious spring ceremonies) by offering him a caron (a carved wooden mug), and implored for his blessing for all men and cattle. The caron is held towards the skies by the jurjun worshipers who are convinced that jurjun would sip from the kumys. Then the contents of the caron, now blessed by divine lips, is distributed among the Yakuts. The shaman asserts that Jut-tas olbochtach-aj-Toen is seen in the sky during the offering of the caron, giving his blessing to the Yakuts and their flocks from a milk-white throne. According to shamanism there is no god greater than Jurjun.

14: Krauss--177-178 E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut-1-5
116, 776, 782, 753

Ajsyt (the distributor of goods). This female deity has her abode in heaven; she does benefits by sending the people children and facilitates delivery to the women. She is favorable in general and especially towards women; she makes menstruation return after a childbirth. After lucky deliveries she is offered sacrifices. The ceremony will be referred to below. These good deities are not offered bloody sacrifices, only victuals (corn).

Good deities of the second class are: (orolžuttar)

1) An-dojdu-itcitja An-darchan-chotun (the female deity who protects the earth); she lives on big trees and gives the plants growth and fertility. According to the shamans she appears to people once in a while; and he who has had such a vision is happy for his lifetime and will suffer no more from any distress. According to the shamans, they accept various kinds of offerings.

2) Sjugja-Toen, chara-begi-toen (the deity of the cattle);he sends children and calves to the people. According to the shamans he sends beleljach-kulun and mjanjach-ogon, i. e. a foal with a spot on his forehead, and a boy with a birth-mark. Those spots and marks are considered as fortunate signs. Proportions and qualities of the actual sacrifice are ordered by the shaman.

3) Uordach-dzjusjugjach-Aj, i. e. the angry deity who punishes a man for his crimes and transgressions. He is offered a horse or a bull.

The teacher Pripuzov mentions that this god gives courageous men, fiery horses,

and powerful bulls.

4) The same author also mentions a god, Chotoj-Aj, who gives a mediocre breed only, but in larger quantity, and with a prevalence of female individuals.

5) Eechsit, a female deity who always accompanies a wanderer on his way and supports him in his good deeds. She enjoys particular love and esteem among the Yakuts. Sacrifices are willingly made for her. She is regarded as the Yakut guardian angel. According to the shamans, there is no protection for him who may have offended Eechsit and is abandoned by her. He is exposed to the evil spirits. If someone escapes a peril, he says that Eechsit has aided him. She is offered a young mare.

6) Baj-Bajanaj is the deity who protects game-hunting. He accompanies the hunter everywhere and helps him in his undertakings. When a Yakut goes to hunt in order to get skins, he carves an idol of wood, and tinges it with the blood of an animal he has killed in his honor. The shaman and the guests eat the meat of the killed animal, and the statue of Baj-Bajan is put in the front corner on the oron of honor. Oron is the table of honor in the left front corner. Sometimes Baj-Bajan stays in his corner for many years.

7) Ukulan, the deity of the fishermen. He lives in the water and affords successful fishing. He is offered two-years-old black calf.

The following gods and good demons may still be mentioned: Kis-tanara, the deity of the stables. He is represented in human appearance, dressed with a sable-fur. His

statue is kept in a bag of chamois leather which is adorned with motley pearls. On important occasions he is asked for help by throwing grease into the fire. [178]

The demon of the fire, An-drachan-toen, or Al-ot-iccitja enjoys equal honors. He is offered part of the meal which is being eaten. It is thrown into the fire.

An-darchan is fancied as an aged man. He is the mediator between mankind and the evil spirits. No sacrifice is made without a secondary sacrifice for him. He is the door through which one can reach another demon.

The god of the fire is characterized by benevolence. He helps in all circumstances, he displays a sensible and vivid interest in the actions of the people, which is repaid by giving him part of the meal which being eaten and throwing it into the fire. The demon is an honest old man. He is known as Byrjachja-bytika-kyryl-tjusjumjat, i. e. the appearance with the white beard.

As demons, or evil spirits, are considered:

1) Z-chosgon-ojun-kinjas, i. e. Satanas, the prince of the monsters. He sends the people evils, diseases, causes deaths of the cattle, and sterility. To appease him a light-brown foal is sacrificed (surzagyl).

2) Bologur-chotuna, Dochsun-Dujan, and Bachsy-toena-al-ljachaj are demons, the former of male, the latter of female sex. According to the shamans, both of them once were human beings, but were changed into demons on account of their sins. They

deprive men of their intelligence. They are offered a mare of spotted color (cugur).

3) Dzachtan-byradaj, or Jurjun-ogustach once was a shaman and possessed a white bull. The bull was stolen so the shaman became malicious. After his death he was punished by becoming a demon. He causes diseases, especially chest ailments in young children with fatal exit, unless he be offered a three years old calf.

4) Sordach-conach was a female shaman when she was alive. She causes several epidemics. According to the shamans her appearance is ugly, she has but one hand and foot, and one eye in the middle of the forehead. She is offered a red-stained cow (kéchebiren).

5) Makyny-kysa-tynyrachtach-kjadzjaj, a former shaman woman, causes madness and other diseases. She is offered a cow with water-bright horns and claws, a bald spot on the forehead, a motley tail, and generally red color... To honor her she is carved as an idol which is adorned with a giant fur. In this idol the fury is inevitably closed in, according to shaman notions. The idol is known as kys-tagara, virgin goddess. She is put in the angle of the central timber to the left of the fireplace, and remains untouched from generation to generation. It is venerated that much especially because the slightest touch may cause the ire of the Fury.

6) Buchar-dodar is the demon of death. Therefore he rides on the bull Bor-kurjun, i. e. the earth-pale panther. She lives in the nether world where like him, and with the exceptions of a few minor ones, there are eight demons of equal rank.

14: Krauss--177-178 E-5 (no date) 1888 Yakut-5
116, 776, 782, 753,

7) Syry-kysa is a woman shaman as to her origin. She seduces people to do wrong, to suffer evil. She is not offered anything. The shaman has no difficulty in exorcizing her.

8) Sjulljukjuter are the demons of the waters. They live the way mortal men do, and raise cattle. In the waters there is much moss. If the latter is brought on the dry ground, it changes to meney, though, after three days it will be moss again.

9) Sebeka is a little ugly girl with an enormous belly. She lives in a poor Kalmuk hut (choton) and brings mischief upon the cattle.

15: Popov -- 259-260 E-3 (no date) 1933 Yakut-1-2
116, 326, 782, 776

"Blacksmiths pacify their spirits by offerings. A Yakut smith when making his clay forge throws into the fire a few bunches of white horse hair. He cannot abandon his profession or he will die, Blacksmiths must surround themselves for life with the noise of the hammers and the light of the sparks (2) in order to avoid being torn to pieces by

2. Sieroshevsky, The Yakuts, p. 632.

supernatural birds with crooked beaks and claws. (3) The author knew in the Viluysk

3. Birds with iron claws. The master of the sacred fire, mighty Nurgun, has a monstrous watchman. It is a thin black bird, with iron wings as long as two strips of birch bark, with feathers like iron swords, with a long iron beak seven fathoms long, an iron neck three fathoms long, an iron tail like a birch bark cylinder, with an iron head like an enormous tub, eyes the size of a cup, and hooked iron claws. Yastremsky, p. 26. (Tr.)

region [260] a Yakut Blacksmith , a very modest and unpretentious man, who later ceased to work in other smithies and worked only at his home. He explained this by the fact that when he arrived home at night the spirits did not give him any rest and even made him sick, demanding presents such as butter and meat, which the blacksmith had to

15: Popov -- 259-260 E-3 (no date) 1933 Yakut-2
116, 326, 782, 776

bring to them, and which he threw into the fire as a sacrifice. He had to beg this food from the people for whom he had worked, and he was unwilling that they should think that he was greedy, and was using the spirits as an excuse for begging. Therefore he decided to work only at home."

15: Popov -- 261-262 E-3 (no date) 1933 Yakut
116, 326, 756, 782, 822

"Only the man who is chosen by the deity himself can be a real blacksmith among the Yakut. K'daai Maqsin [RCH: see category 116, pp. 260-261] selects only those whose hammer-noises reach his habitation, and he indicates his choice by making the novice sick. Woe to one who fails to understand this; he will die, or at best will remain a cripple for the rest of his days. The blacksmith during his sickness must donate to K'daai Maqsin through the shaman a bull or a cow of 'three grasses' (3) of any color.

3. Three years old.

Formerly the animal had to be of a definite color, 'red' according to Pripusov, 'black' [262] according to Kornilov. (1) The head, the heart with the arteries, and the liver

1. Kornilov, I., The Ceremony of Initiation of the Blacksmith and Kitai Bahsi, the Ancestor of Blacksmiths. Izvestia of E. Siberia, Section of Russian Geographical Society, Vol. XXXIX, 1908, p. 85.

of the sacrificial animal are placed during the shamanistic ceremony on the anvil and are struck with hammers." [RCH: for text of the complete consecration ritual of a novice blacksmith among the Yakut, see category 539, pp. 262-271]

15: Popov --262 E-3 (no date) 1933 Yakut
116, 326, 782, 756, 177.78 Russia
636.78

"A description of the sacrifice to the deity by the blacksmiths is given in the literature by Kornilov. (2) Due to the interesting details I quote it verbatim: 'The ceremony takes

2. Op. cit.

over the three year old black bull. The shaman takes the soul of the bull and hands it to Kitai Bahsi saying, 'I have brought to you a sacrifice for this man; do not harm him but make a blacksmith out of him.' After the shamanistic ceremony the heart of the animal is extracted with iron tongs and is placed on the anvil. The initiated must strike it with the hammer and smash it. If he crushes it with one blow he will be a good blacksmith, if he requires more, he will be medium or bad.' The custom described by Kornilov is very likely older than the one described below, as is indicated by the more cruel method of killing the animal. This method, not especially ritualistic but not general in the old times, was abandoned by order of the Russian authorities."

16: Great Britain Admiralty -- 168 [5] G-3 (no date) 1920 Yakut
116. 183. 264. 574. 782

"They have many customs and superstitions. No woman other than the hostess may give anything to eat or drink to a male stranger before the fire-place, but must walk round the chimney to present it. It is wrong to wash plates; such waste will produce scarcity;earthern vessels are cleaned by being burnt; it is not felt then that anything is wasted because the food thus consumed is an offering to the fire, which also receives a small spoonful as an offering of thanks."

17: Erman--308-309 N-3 (1828-29) 1850 Yakut-1-2
116, 782, 756, 231

"At the yurts of Porotovsk, 109 versts from Yakutsk, I made at noon magnetical and astronomical observations, and here already I found the Russian maps erring considerably in the position of places with respect to Yakutsk; we then went over thickly wooded hills to Churopchinsk, and thence to Aruilákhinsk, where we stayed till morning. In the woods between these places, I remarked for the first time, a singular custom of the nomadic Yakuts. At different points on the road the trees were to be seen hung thick with horse-hair, and my driver assured me that every horseman who passed by was sure to add more or less to this strange store. Here, also, it was manifest that white horses prevail among the Yakuts; but, apart from this, many of the tufts of hair had so weather-beaten an appearance, that there could be no doubt of their antiquity. Others were quite fresh, and had been tied on the boughs but a day or two. Our Yakut attendant said further, in reply to our inquiries--and, indeed, all his answers in similar matters were much to the same effect--that it was done in compliance with ancient custom, and that he knew no other reason for it. Yet the religious bearing of this custom appears at once from its name, which signifies a propitiation for the Lieshi or Spirit of the Woods, as the Kosaks explain it. All the merchants of Yakutsk deem it expedient to adopt, when travelling, the prevalent belief, and to satisfy its demands at the cost of their horses' tails. The Yakuts here have clung to several other devout inventions of their shamans. Thus the annual consecration of a horse is usual with them, as with the Western Turkish tribes. They select for this purpose the best stallions, which, after

receiving certain benedictions, remain thenceforth exempt from every kind of work. It is possible that they intend thereby to offer a kind of satisfaction in general for the labours or violent death await- [309] ing them, yet the shrewd priests have not overlooked the practical advantage of securing good treatment for the fathers of the droves."

18: Priklonski--81-82 E-5 (no date) 1891 Yakut
116, 756, 776, 782

Once the shaman has managed to get in touch with the spirit he persuades himself that he is standing in the face of him, indulges in high praises of his power, strength, and importance, makes honorable remarks on his own profession which culminates in helping suffering mankind and paying reverence and unperturbable devotion to the spirits and invokes the demon for the mercy of caring for his, the shaman's, protégé, of having pity with his torment and the disconsolate state of his family, and of freeing his soul which he, the demon, is holding in his almightly hands. The negotiations of the shaman with the spirit are not always successful; because much depends on the disposition of the spirit. The mediation is considered successful when the demon definitely states which kind of sacrifices he is ready to accept. Quite often it happens that the shaman persuades the demon to be content, in view of poverty prevailing the family, [82] with a minor offering and to accept the skin of a polar hare or fox instead of a foal or bull. The shaman then notifies the persons present of the issue of the negotiations, whereupon they give him the sacrifice to be done.

24: Wrangell--34-35 G-3 (1820-23) 1842 Yakut
116, 533, 782, 824

"Our way led over a hill covered with pines, and I noticed that several old trees near the path had tufts of horsehair fastened to their branches, and that a number of sticks were stuck in the ground near them. The leading postillion here got off his horse, plucked a few hairs from his mane, and [35] fastened them to one of the branches with much solemnity. He told us that this was a customary offering to the spirit of the mountain to obtain his protection during the journey, and that foot-passengers placed a stick in the ground with the same intention. This is a general practice among the Jakuti, and is even persevered in by many who have professed Christianity. My Jakuti sang almost incessantly. Their style of singing is monotonous, and rather melancholy, and is quite characteristic of this gloomy and superstitious people: their songs describe the beauties of the landscape in terms which appeared to me not a little exaggerated, and which I attributed at first to a poetic imagination; but my sergeant informed me it was customary thus to try to propitiate the spirit of the mountain by flattering encomiums on his territory."

27: Coxwell--34-35 B-3 (no date) 1925 Yakut
116, 538, 776, 782

"A belief in the efficacy of sacrifices to spirits is clearly revealed by the tales of the Gilyaks, Koryaks, Chukchis, Yakuts and Letts. That trees have been supposed to speak and act is implied in Tungusian, Lappish, Chukchi, and even Russian stories. The belief that spirits in monstrous forms attack men is indicated by simple and earnest narratives of the lowest Siberian races and even of the Yakuts. Though a story is not [35] necessarily a proof of belief, it is probably true that the wide existence of a story points to a degree of acceptance, not far removed from a belief, in races whose powers of discrimination between the gradations of make believe are small. Do not our children crave to be told that a tale is true?"

27: Coxwell--262 [3] B-3 (no date) 1925 Yakut
116, 776, 782, 823

"They speak of a supreme God, but do not worship him. The earth was made by such a Being, and at first it was small and level; then an evil spirit scratched up the surface, so that there appeared hills and valleys. The Yakuts have their good and evil spirits, and the shamans deliver earnest addresses to air and water gods. He throws melted butter into the air to appease demons and express gratitude to the gods."

37: Dobell--312 G-2 (1812-13) 1830 Yakut
116, 484, 782, 823

"We travelled to the source of the Ourak, crossed three very steep mountains, and descending, passed a large lake, the source of the river Udama, surrounded by mountains, and three or four versts in length. On the trees that skirted the road, at the tops of these mountains, I observed a considerable quantity of horse-hair, tied in little bunches to the branches, which my guide informed me were offerings to the gods of the mountains, made by the Yakuts who had crossed them without accident."

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

796 deity; and formerly horses were often consecrated by being
273 driven to the east.[1]

The plate just referred to represents one act in a spring festival.[2] In front of the altar stands the steward, having on one side of him the owner of the drove, and on the other the latter's wife. All three face to the east side of the sky, where the benevolent deities have their abode. On the right side of the altar stand nine innocent youths in a row, and on the left a row of nine pure maidens, with goblets filled with kumiss consecrated
[292] to the benevolent deities. The splendid festival attire worn on this occasion by a Yakut girl is shown in Plate XX, which represents both back and front views. The trimming consists of valuable fur, silver pendants, and other decorations.

The steward addresses a prayer to the "creators," begging for blessings, — increase of horses and cattle, a good harvest of hay, good health for the people and animals, and an abundance of food. Then he takes the kumiss-festival ladle (*ysyax xamyyaha*), and makes a libation, in the direction of the dawn, to the benevolent deities (see Plate XVII). Then, while making a libation to the ground, he addresses the local deity, "the owner of the place" (*ān doidu iccitā*), asking him not to harm
[787] the inhabitants of the spot and the members of the clan. After that, the steward, with the help of the sacrificial ladle, proceeds to divine. He throws the ladle towards the sky: and if it falls with the front part upwards, it portends the granting by the deities of future abundance; and all the people utter the joyful cry *Uru!*

Then the boys and girls give the goblets with the sacrificial kumiss, according to the directions of the steward, to the elder and honored members of the clan, both male and female. These, after placing themselves, — the men on the right and the women on the left of the altar, — drink off the kumiss from
[782]

[1] Bloody sacrifices are given only to evil deities, and not to the "creators" (see JOCHELSON, The Koryak, l. c., p. 91).

[2] The festival above mentioned was arranged specially for my benefit; and most of the people, not having ancient dresses, are not clothed in festival attire, as they would have been in olden times. Neither have they enough kumiss-goblets. Most of the goblets to be seen in the photograph were lent by me from the specimens I had acquired in other localities for the collection. This festival took place within two hundred miles of the town of Yakutsk, to the east.

1. [The Spring Kumiss festival -- Analyst]

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

296 273 the goblets, and pass them on to the less important and the younger people. Behind every honored or aged member of the clan, sit or stand his domestics, less esteemed relatives, young men, and laborers. He looks after the welfare of each of these. When the goblet is emptied, it is given back to the steward or the host to be filled.

[262] At the same time, not far from the altar, other stewards are preparing tables, or simply boards on the ground, on which are placed piles of horse and cow flesh, and dishes of melted butter. Every chief of a family or clan receives a large portion of meat and butter, which he divides among his people.

The whole day passes with songs, round dances, games, races and other contests, and shamanistic performances. The poetical choral songs of the young men and girls, in praise of the spring and love, are most interesting.[1] TROSTCHANSKY[2] relates, also, that during the kumiss festival the change of winter to spring is personated in a contest between two men. One of them, dressed in white, represents spring, and is called "son of 'creator'" (*ayy uola*). The other, clad in black, represents winter, and is called "son of evil spirit" (*abasy uola*).

The autumnal festival is celebrated in honor of the destructive forces, and is therefore called *abasy-ysyax*. This festival is dedicated to the evil spirits (*abasylar*), the inhabitants of the west and the representatives of darkness and night, in order that they may not interfere with them in winter, the time of the year when starvation, disease, and death are imminent. This festival, also, takes place in the open air, but at night.

[776] The first night of the festival is in honor of Big-Lord (*Ulu-Toyon*) and the evil spirits of the upper world subordinate to him. The second night is in honor of *Axsan Duolai* and his subordinates, the evil spirits of the lower world. To [782] all of these evil spirits, in addition to the libations of kumiss made to the benevolent deities, blood sacrifices of cattle and horses are also made. This ceremony, according to Trost-

[1] Examples of such songs may be found in MIDDENDORFF, Sibirische Reise (St. Petersburg, 1875), Part 2, p. 1578; SÄROSHEVSKI, The Yakut (St. Petersburg, 1896), Vol. I, pp. 587 et seq.

[2] The Black Faith of the Yakut (Kasan, 1902), p. 106.

40: Burr--151 N-2 (no date) 1931 Yakut

116. 771. 776. 782

"Officially they are all Orthodox Christians, but their primitive Shamanism is but thinly covered, and in the remoter districts of the north the hunters and trappers are probably all still pagan at heart. Their primitive belief is not in God but in Abáhy, that is, evil spirits. The three chief ones were Ühe Abáhy, the Spirit of the Air; Allará Abáhy, the Spirit of the Underworld; and, appropriately enough, Hotugu Abáhy, the Spirit of the North. Their priests, called oyun, made sacrifices of animals to appease these evil spirits to the beating of the düngur, a kind of kettle-drum with little bells attached."

44: Gilder --190-191 J-2 (1882) 1883 Yakut
116, 634, 778, 782

"The fifth day after leaving the Kolyma we crossed the divide between that river and the Indigirka, and here, by the roadside, upon the crest of the mountain, stood a cross which marks the dividing line between the police districts of the Kolyma and Werchojansk. . . . [191]. . . The cross was hung with bits of cloth and ribbon and bunches of horsehair, and in some of the many cracks that seamed the venerable structure were copper coins, all gifts from previous travellers, to charm away any prospective evil that might attend so great a change of residence. Each member of the party contributed something to this curious collection--the old man a leaf of tobacco, Nányah a ribbon from her brown tresses, while I tied a few hairs from the tail of each horse in our train to one of the sticks that stood in the snow near the cross and from which waved many similar offerings to the idols of the Yakouts and Siberia. It was to me altogether a strange and interesting spectacle, this weird cross, with its ribbons and horsetails waving in the breeze from the summit of a Siberian mountain; the sudden transition from devotion to levity upon the part of my companions as they turned from their prayers to participate in the rites of the savages and decorate the cross of the Christians with the emblems of idolatry--all this was equally new and impressive."

53: Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

326 The same kind of superstitious awe with which the shamans were
756 regarded was also applied to the smiths, particularly hereditary smiths who were believed to have mysterious powers. The smith was considered to some extent related to the shaman. "The smith and the shaman are out of one nest." Smiths could treat illnesses, give advice and even make prophecies. The smith forged iron pendants for the shaman's costume, and this fact alone made him awesome. The smith had special power over the spirits for, according to Yakut superstition, spirits were afraid of the sound of iron and the noise of the smith's bellows.

776 Apart from shamanism, the Yakuts had another cult, connected with
782 their livelihood. The chief deity in this cult was Bay-Bayanay, the spirit of the forest and patron of hunting and fishing. According to some beliefs, Bayanay had 11 brothers. They brought luck in hunting and fishing, so that the hunter exorted them to help him before he went out hunting, and after a successful hunt made them offerings of some of the catch by throwing pieces of fat into the fire or smearing the images of Bayanay with blood.

776 The belief in ichchi or "masters" of different objects was evidently connected with hunting and fishing. The Yakuts believed that all animals, trees, and different phenomena of nature possessed ichchi, just as certain domestic articles, such as knives and axes. The ichchi themselves were neither good nor evil. In order to placate the "masters" of the mountains, cliffs, rivers, forests and so on, at various places—river crossings, mountain passes and so on—the Yakuts left small offerings of pieces of meat, butter and other food, and also scraps of cloth. The worship of
776 certain animals came close to this cult as well. The bear was an object
825 of great reverence and as a result people avoided calling it by name, were afraid of killing it, and considered it to be a transformed sorcerer. The eagle was also worshipped and called toyon kyyl ("mister beast"), and so were the raven, hawk and certain other birds and animals.

776 All these beliefs go back to the ancient means of livelihood of the Yakuts, and pastoralism also gave rise to its own set of beliefs and rituals. These comprised the cult of the deities of fertility, which was not preserved for very long and is therefore less known. Among these beliefs was clearly the belief in ayyy, benevolent deities who bestowed various benefits. It was thought the ayyy lived in the east.

First place among the benevolent spirits was taken by Urun-Ayyy-Toyon ("white lord and creator"), who lived in the eighth heaven, was kind and did not interfere in human affairs, hence there was apparently no cult of him. The image of this spirit was very much mixed up with features of the Christian God. According to a certain belief, still higher than Ayyy-Toyon was Aar-Toyon, who inhabited the ninth heaven. Below them followed a large number of other benevolent deities, who were supposed to bestow various blessings. The most important figure among them
[844 was the female deity *Aüuuhum* (Ayyysyt), who bestowed fertility, patronized women in labor and gave mothers their children. Sacrifices were made to Ayyysyt during childbirth, and since it was considered that after the birth this goddess remained three days in the house, a special female ritual (to which men were not allowed to come) was performed at the end of three days in order to celebrate her departure.

796 The chief ceremony in honor of the benevolent deities, the patrons of fertility, was the kumys festival, *ыһыах*, in the old days. This festival was organized in the spring or halfway through the summer, when there was plenty of milk; it was held in the open air, in the meadows, and many people gathered together for it. The peak moment of the festival

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924)1927
AB6 Ainu AB6
Yakut. RY2

ing hour together, comparing the Yakut and Ainu peoples. He told me that he could not discern any similarity between the two races, either in physique, general customs or language. However, he mentioned a thing or two about the Yakuts' superstitions regarding fire, which were of great interest to me.

While the Ainu people look upon fire as it exists upon the hearth as of the feminine gender, the Yakuts hold it to be masculine. The divine spirit, which is the essence of fire, is supposed by them to be a grey-haired and most fussy old man. He is never entirely at rest and is a very garrulous old fellow. The cracking, snapping, jumping and hissing of fire are his remarks and whisperings. What his whisperings and shuffling about mean, ordinary people do not understand, yet the shamans and infants who have not yet learnt to speak understand it quite well, just as they are said to understand what the birds say to one another in their singing and chirping.

Like the Ainu "Old Woman Fire," the Yakut "Old Man Fire" knows what people are saying and doing about him in the houses, so all must be careful not to hurt his feelings, for that would be very dangerous. Rubbish may not be cast into the fire, and one must take care that no leaves or dirt be scraped off one's footgear near it. Nor must the fire be poked with any iron instrument. Moreover, the wooden fire-tongs must be burned up every ten days or so, and new ones provided. Unless these taboos are strictly adhered to, headaches and general misfortune will ensue.

A good housewife always takes care that the "Old Man Fire" may be satisfied with her, and she casts into it a small portion of everything which is being prepared for eating. The Hokkaidō Ainu custom is not so. It is the men alone who worship fire among these, and make offerings to it. I have never yet seen an Ainu woman on this island worshipping the fire or making offerings to it. The Yakuts say that as no one

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924) 1927
AB6 Ainu AB6
Yakut RV2

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ever knows what kind of temper the "Old Man Fire" may be in, as he sits there burning upon the hearth, it behoves everyone to conciliate him often by offering him little gifts, for he is a very jealous one. He is said to love fat, butter and cream better than anything else.

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As regards firelight, there are two interesting taboos connected therewith. No young man may pass beyond the strip of light which falls from the household fire, to cross over to the women's side of the hearth; nor may any woman, if she can possibly avoid it, pass through the strip of light in front of the hearth. Any transgression of these two taboos would bring dire trouble, the Yakuts believe.